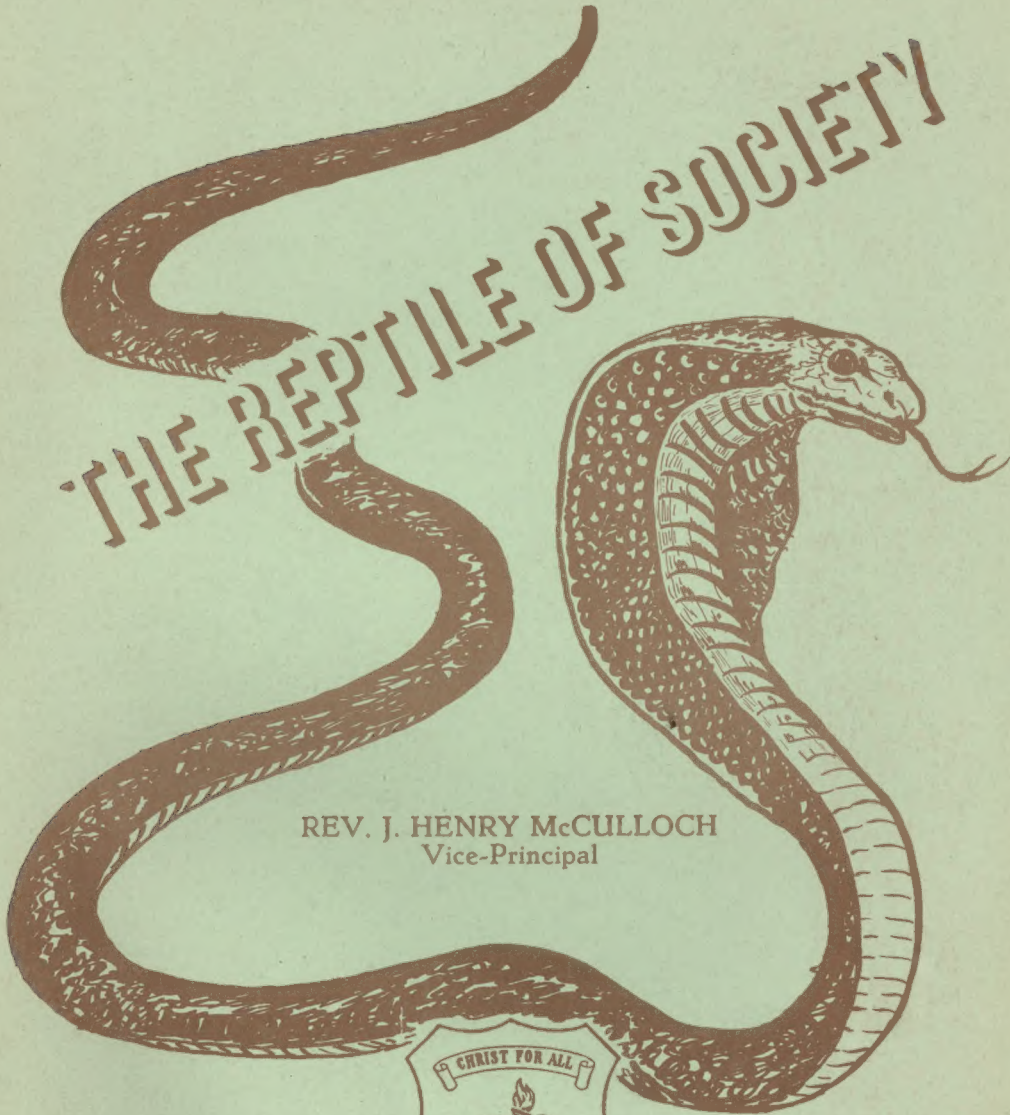


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LIQUOR TRAFFIC

THE REPTILE OF SOCIETY



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LIQUOR TRAFFIC - THE REPTILE OF SOCIETY.

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Are we our brother's keeper? Are we responsible when a fellow individual falls a victim to circumstances of which we are aware and of which we have not warned him? Ezekiel 3:17-21 says we are. Gideon, as recorded in Judges 6, protested against the altar of Baal. He tore down that altar and built in its place an altar to God. Did he do right? Of course he did; God told him to do it. John the Baptist protested when wicked Herod took to himself the wife of his brother Philip. Was John right? Certainly. Our Lord Jesus protested when the holy temple of God was made a house of merchandise. Was he right? Of course He was; He could not be in error. Surely we realize that there are times when we ought to protest and it is wrong when we do not protest strongly against certain things. There are therefore no apologies to offer for this message. It is a protest against that which is bringing ruin to precious lives and precious souls -- physical ruin, mental ruin, moral ruin, spiritual ruin. Let us not be afraid to protest when it is necessary that we do so.

The story is told of a man who one time was driving down the streets of a town in South Dakota, when his attention was drawn to a group of small children throwing sticks and stones at something on the sidewalk, and yelling excitedly. He got out of his vehicle and went over to see what it was all about. There, on the very front street was a snake - a big fellow. The shape of its head, the markings, together with nine rattles, identified the creature as a rattlesnake. It had been hibernating somewhere in the back lane, but the warm weather had brought it from its hiding place out onto the front street. Now crawling out of the back lane to the front street had not changed the nature of that rattler one bit - it was still a deadly reptile - a killer; it had the same fangs in its mouth, and the same poison in those fangs that it ever had. It could destroy any or all of those children. What should that man do? Should he reason it out in his mind that that rattler would do him no harm for he would not interfere at all? Should he reason that his own little boy, who was over one thousand miles away from the place was perfectly safe, and that therefore the reptile was no concern of his? Should he suggest that those children make a nice attractive place in which to keep that deadly creature for a pet? Should he just shrug his shoulders and walk away and leave things alone? He didn't do that. Those other boys and girls were in danger, and for their sakes, he picked up a stone

and smashed the head of that deadly killer. Did he do right? or did he do wrong? What would you say?

Today there is a reptile loose in our society. We know it by the name "Liquor Traffic". The Bible compares it to a reptile and says "it biteth like a SERPENT and stingeth like an ADDER". At one time the sale of intoxicating drinks was frowned upon by men and women - it was, so to speak, "in the back lanes". But that reptile has been brought out onto the front streets; it has been given a so-called honored place in some circles of society. Its nature has not changed, and though it may be given an attractive name such as "Palm Garden", it is still the booze joint that it always has been and always will be. The front street of society has not made it any different.

Not satisfied with this, there is always considerable pressure from some sources that liquor should be sold through more extended outlets such as cock-tail bars, restaurants, and even in grocery stores. Why is there such demand for more and more liquor outlets? Is it not that the narcotic poison can be brought to those who do not patronize existing liquor stores? And if we are to tolerate the sale of liquor in such places as restaurants, what is to keep us away from the "bar maids" who are certainly not unknown in the world? Imagine young women, perhaps in their teens, with pleasing personalities, "attractively" dressed, being used for bait to attract others into the deadly clutches of alcoholic drinks. Listen, young women, this concerns you! God has given you an honorable place to fill in the community in which you live. You should be women in modest and proper apparel. A woman with a virtuous character can be a strong influence for good in society, and a glory to her God. Don't let men with vile intentions reduce your standing to that of a piece of cheese that baits a mouse trap.

There are some who cry long and loud for the right of 'mixed drinking'. Many are their arguments to support the privilege of men and women drinking together. There are always the men who say, "we want a place to take the 'ladies' for drinks." I am confident that they will never get a 'lady' worthy of that honorable title to enter into such places as that! J. G. Holland, writing in "Every Day Topics" says in part:

"Woman has never been associated with wine without disgrace and disaster. A man who can sing of wine and women in the same breath is one whose presence is disgrace, and whose touch is pollution. A man who can forget mother and sister, or wife and daughter, and wantonly engage in a revel

in which the name of woman is invoked to heighten the pleasures of the intoxicating cup, is, beyond controversy and without mitigation, a beast... Of the worst foes that woman has ever had to encounter, wine stands at the head. The appetite for strong drink in man has spoiled the lives of more women, ruined more hopes for them, scattered more fortunes for them, brought more shame, sorrow and hardship, than any other evil that exists... There are women by thousands who dread to hear that step that once thrilled them with pleasure, because that step has learned to reel under the influence of the seductive poison. There are women who suffer from bruises and brutalities inflicted by husbands mad by drink... The sorrows and horrors of a wife with a drunken husband, or a mother with a drunken son, are as near the realization of hell as can be reached in this world. The shame, the indignation, the sorrow, the sense of disgrace for herself and her children, the poverty and not infrequently the beggary; the fear and the fact of violence; the lingering, life-long struggle and despair of countless women with drunken husbands are enough to make all women curse wine and engage unitedly to oppose it everywhere as the worst enemy of her sex."

We hear the cry for "better quality" of intoxicating drinks. Listen! Liquor, whether it carries the label of the government or whether it is made in a bootlegger's still, is a protoplasmic poison, a harmful habit-forming narcotic drug. It will inflame a man's passions, befuddle his brain, and make him a menace behind the wheel of an automobile. It causes innocent men, women and children to suffer poverty, abuse, and heartache. It is this demoralizing effect upon human society that every one of us should hate and abhor.

You hear it said that you cannot control drinking through legislation. Now let's be consistent about this. In no other activity in life is there so much nonsensical talk as there is in this liquor traffic. There is legislation to cover your activities where you go and what you do. Is there a law against murder? Is there a law against robbery? Is there a law against slander? Of course there is, and rightly so! But do men commit murder? Do they commit robbery? Do they slander? Unfortunately they do. Should then our laws be repealed? Should the opportunities to commit these offences be broadened because the laws do not eliminate the crime? Not for one minute would you agree to such a thing for you know that there is a restraint upon murder when the would-be offender knows that before him is the hangman's noose, or the electric chair; there is a restraint upon robbery when there

is the penalty of imprisonment for the offence; there is a restraint upon slander when men know that they are liable for damages because of it. Now again, let us be consistent. If laws to control the use of intoxicating drinks do not prevent some individuals from getting intoxicated, how can it be possible to improve such conditions by repealing the restraining laws? How can it be possible to improve conditions by increasing the outlets for liquor sales or to take alcoholic drinks into restaurants and other places for sale where young people freely enter? Surely we are not so blind that we cannot see the source from which all this comes! Have you not noticed that those who tell us that "you cannot control drinking through legislation" are those who have a dollar-and-cents interest in the sale of alcoholic drinks?

Some try to tell us that this liquor traffic serves "a good purpose" in that it "brings revenue to the government". Each year the Public Treasurer reckons the revenue from the business of the Liquor Stores; he deducts the costs to the government, that is, the amount actually paid out by the government in order to collect the liquor revenue. Then he announces the so-called profits - millions of dollars each year. At least these are called profits; but are they? Is the full overhead accounted for? Perhaps this portion of a poem by Anna Stanton Lay gives us a truer picture than any auditor's report ever could:

COUNTING UP THE PROFITS

They are counting up the profits in the offices and chambers
Of the clever clerks and officers who keep the public till;
They are publishing the tidings in official sheets and papers
So that all the poor taxpayers learn that "liquor pays the bill".

They are building large additions to the jails and hospitals
For more frequent are the accidents, and crime on the increase;
They are giving more relief to children lacking clothes and victuals
While their fathers spend their wages quenching thirst that will not cease.

They are advertising whiskey in the magazines and papers;
They are telling girls and women that it's clever, smart to drink;
"You must learn to hold your liquor" - foul advice to younger people;
Not a hint that gin and brandy stultify the power to think.

Not a hint that wines and liquors - all their fancy combinations -
Are but various containers for that poison alcohol.
Which, when drunken, oft unleashes idiotic, bestial notions
Unrestrained by palsied, inert will of liquor's thrall.

While complacently, the wise men count their profits from this traffic,
While the advertisers paint their hellish lies in beauty's garb,
Who is counting up the wreckage, pitiful and sad, terrific,
As new addicts join the army, wounded by rum's savage barb?

Are they counting little children, robbed of home, and care of mothers?
Are they counting girls in beer halls, guzzling liquor unashamed?
Are they counting up their profits from the murder of their brothers?
Are they counting the demented, feeble-minded, crazed, defamed?

Oh, my friends! From such profits you can reap no benefaction;
All such gold is minted from some human being's hurt,
Fouled with lust, and with the blood of innocents; cruel temptation!
"Unclean! Unclean!" the leper's cry shows these profits "bloodsoaked dirt".

I ask you in all sincerity. If the government took the entire OVERHEAD into consideration, would there be any profits in the liquor traffic? Human life alone would put it into deficit. Oh, it is true that every bottle of alcoholic poison that is sold in our liquor stores adds to those millions of dollars of revenue, but remember we call on individuals and insurance companies to pay the overhead of maimed bodies and wrecked automobiles; we call on innocent children to pay the overhead of broken homes and wrecked lives. God have mercy! and open our eyes to this cursed thing.

A trite remark concerning drunk-driving accidents has it that gasoline and alcohol do not mix, but this reprint from the "Los Angeles Times" maintains that they do:

"They mix at any intersection of our roads and highways. They mix arms and legs with windshields, steering gears, doors, wheels, gadgets and hoods. They mix pedestrians with the occupants of cars. They mix the victims in arguments, mix statements to the police, give mixed accounts to the insurance companies and mixed testimonies to the courts. They mix up everything they contact including those who are trying to find a recipe for their unscrambling. They mix minds and morals."

If you do not believe this, sit up and take notice; read your papers! World War II did not take as many lives nor maim as many bodies as the mixing of alcohol and gasoline over an equal period of time. It is told of a group of people who were looking at an immense brass-mouthed gun. A gentleman said, "It is perfect and beautiful; but was there ever a more sure weapon of death?" "Yes," replied a lady aloud, "a distillery." And no one said another word for they knew that every barrel of liquor is capable of scattering more destruction in the form of woe, want, shame, sorrow, disease and death, than the barrel of any military weapon.

What do men and women of earlier days and also of today

say about the use of alcohol? Here are just a few:

The noted surgeon, Dr. Charles Mayo, in addressing a large convention of boys, said in part:

"You can get along with a wooden leg, but you can't get along with a wooden head. The physical value of man is not so much. Man, as analyzed in our laboratories is worth about ninety-eight cents: seven bars of soap, lime enough to whitewash a chicken coop, phosphorous enough to cover the heads of a thousand matches. This is not very much you see. It is the brain that counts. But in order that your brain may be kept clear you must keep your body fit and well. That cannot be done if one drinks liquor. A man who has to drag around a habit that is a danger and a menace to society ought to go off to the woods and live alone. We do not tolerate the obvious use of morphine or cocaine or opium, and we should not tolerate intoxicating liquor because I tell you these things are what break down the command of the individual over his own life and his own destiny. Through alcohol a man loses his co-ordination. That is why liquor is no advantage to the brain. You hear people tell how they had their wits quickened for the first half-hour by liquor but they don't tell you how later their bodies could not act in co-ordination with their brain."

In giving an account of his early life, Admiral Farragut said: "My father went down in behalf of the United States Government to put an end to Aaron Burr's rebellion. I was a cabin boy, and went along with him. I knew all the wickedness there was at that time abroad. One day my father cleared everybody out of the cabin except myself, and locked the door. He said, "David, what are you going to do? What are you going to be?" "Well Father," I replied, "I am going to follow the sea." "Follow the sea, and be a poor, miserable, drunken sailor . . . ?" "Oh, no, Father, I will not be that; I will tread the quarter-deck and command as you do." "No David," my father said, "a person who has your principles and your bad habits will never tread the quarter-deck or command." My father went out and shut the door after him, and I said then, "I will change; I will never swear again; I will never drink again; I will never gamble again. And by the help of God I have kept those vows to this time. Soon after that I became a Christian, and that decided my future for time and for eternity."

Evangeline Booth of the Salvation Army said:

"Drink has shed more blood, hung more crepe, sold more homes, plunged more people into bankruptcy, armed more villains, slain more children, snapped more wedding rings, defiled more innocence, blinded more eyes, dethroned more reason, wrecked more manhood, dishonored more womanhood, broken more hearts, blasted more lives, driven more to suicide and dug more graves than any other scourge that has cursed the world."

Listen to this story which Abraham Lincoln told concerning himself:

One day Abraham Lincoln was riding in a stage coach in company with a Kentucky Colonel. After riding a number of miles together the colonel took a bottle of whiskey out of his pocket and said, "Mr. Lincoln, won't you take a drink with me?" "No, thank you Colonel," replied Mr. Lincoln, "I never drink whiskey." They rode along together for a number of miles more visiting very pleasantly, when the gentleman from Kentucky reached into his pocket and brought out some cigars, saying, "Now Mr. Lincoln, if you won't drink with me, will you smoke with me?" "I would like to tell you a story Colonel, a story of an experience I had when I was a boy about nine years old. My mother called me to her bedside one day. She was sick - very sick - and this is what she said to me: 'Abey, the doctor tells me that I am not going to get well. I want you to promise me before I go that you will never use whiskey or tobacco as long as you live.' I promised my mother I never would; and up to this hour, Colonel, I have kept that promise. Now would you advise me to break that promise to my mother and take a smoke or a drink with you?" The colonel put his hand on Mr. Lincoln's shoulder and said with a voice that trembled with emotion, "No, Mr. Lincoln, I wouldn't have you do it for the world. It was one of the best promises you ever made. I would give a thousand dollars today if I had made my mother a promise like that and had kept it as you have done."

Now this is what God says in His Word:

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine: they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a SERPENT and stingeth like an ADDER. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea,

thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." - Proverbs 23:29-35.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." - Proverbs 20:1

"Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine! ... But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment." - Isaiah 28:1,7.

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunk also." - Habakkuk 2:15.

People sometimes say, "Well, we hear so much about this thing that I don't know what I should do. What attitude should I take concerning this liquor business?" There are but three attitudes. One is to yield to drink; to go the way of the alcoholic. The second is to endeavour to be a "social drinker" who plans to "drink if he wants to or leave it alone if he wants to". He plans to drink in "moderation". The third is the attitude of the total abstainer. You and I choose one of these three. Which will it be? Whichever one you choose, you are sowing seed and you will of that seed reap the harvest. Suppose you choose the way of the alcoholic. What is the result? A life of drunkenness and debauchery - a way that is a wreck no matter which way you look at it: physically, mentally, morally, spiritually. This poem was written by a life-time prisoner in Joliet Prison.

The saloon is sometimes called a bar; that's true:

A BAR to heaven, a door to hell;
Whoever named it, named it well.
A BAR to manliness and wealth;
A door to want and broken health.
A BAR to honor, pride and fame;
A door to grief and sin and shame.
A BAR to home and a BAR to prayer;
A door to darkness and despair.
A BAR to an honored, useful life;

A door to brawling, senseless strife,
A BAR to all that's true and brave;
A door to every drunkard's grave.
A BAR to joys that home imparts;
A door to tears and aching hearts.
A BAR to heaven, a door to hell!
Who named it a BAR named it well.

Suppose you take the second attitude - you are planning to be the social drinker who does not intend to drink to the extent of intoxication. You set for yourself that standard of moderation. Can you guarantee that you will be able to adhere to that standard? Remember there have been many before you, with just as good intentions as you have, who have begun the same course that you consider, who are today broken down alcoholics. To yourself, your attitude is a dangerous one; to others it is even more dangerous for, even if you should hold to that standard of moderation successfully, which you are not likely to do, the Bible warns you that "No man liveth to himself". You are an influence upon others; perhaps someone who is near and dear to you, but certainly someone who is near and dear to someone. And you, taking the attitude of so-called "moderation" will make more drunkards than one who is himself a drunkard. The man who is a drunkard became one not by following the example of another drunkard, for no one is likely to take the drunkard in the gutter for his example; but rather did he follow one who "drank in moderation", and then could not control the habit nor break the hold of alcohol. The attitude of moderation is a dangerous one. We sometimes hear it said that if we could co-operate with the "moderate social drinker" we would have a greater following in liquor control. In the early days of the Women's Christian Temperance Union the question came up as to whether the name "Christian" should form a part of the title of the organization. Some thought that by omitting the word "Christian" the organization would command a larger following. In the discussion, Miss Francis E. Willard rose to speak. She said, "If I understand correctly the purpose of this organization, it is not to get a following, but to set up a standard." Her argument won. Today our duty is no less; we have a standard to uphold. Let us not compromise. Rather should we be guided by the Bible, as Paul, led by the Holy Spirit said in I Corinthians 8:9-13

"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak.
For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is

weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols:

And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

If this be true with such a thing as food, how much more important is it when applied to the use of intoxicating drinks. Here then is the attitude which is the proper one - total abstinence. Whether you think you can take it or leave it alone, then even for the sake of the one who is weaker than yourself, leave it entirely alone. God holds you responsible for a weaker man's downfall. We mistake the meaning of the word "Temperance". It means, "not to excess", and we must remember that one drink of intoxicating drink is one too many - it is excessive. The one who will take one drink "just to be sociable" will take another and another "just to be sociable". Let us be as Daniel and "purpose in our hearts that we will not defile ourselves" with wine or other strong drink.

You have likely, at some time or other, entered a town or city and have seen a billboard bearing such a message as this: "Conserve Wild Life". It is sponsored by some brewery. Just remember that that is the kind of life the breweries like to promote - "Wild Life". Wild parties! Did you ever read about one in the Bible? It is recorded in chapter five of the Book of Daniel. Belshazzar, stupefied with wine, blaspheming God, in company with his loose-living crowd, saw the hand appear so mysteriously and write upon the plaster of the wall, "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting." And that night was Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans slain. The wages of sin is death. This is why the Christian Church is concerned about this thing and takes a stand of protest against it. The Christian Church should stand for and promote the plan and the will of God: and the plan and the will of God is diametrically opposite to the plan and the purpose of liquor traffic. First, God wants each of us to have strong bodies and alert minds; to this end our Lord Jesus healed the bodies and cast out the demons of affliction. Alcoholic drink does the opposite; it befuddles the mind and destroys the body. Second, God has established the home, bound it in unity with the bonds of love and holy matrimony, He made parenthood an honorable thing; but alcoholic drinking is responsible today for more wrecked homes

and more dishonorable parenthood than all other causes combined. Third, God looks with compassion upon the souls of men for "He is not willing that any should perish": but alcoholic drinking not only ruins lives and wrecks homes, it drags the precious souls of men and women, yes and young people, out into a lost eternity, without God and without hope in the world; souls for whom Christ died. As with Belshazzar, the wages of sin is death; but Jesus said, "I am come that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Whatever the sin stain might be, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin". The hope of one down in drink, as in any other form of sin, is salvation through Jesus Christ. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Friend, if you have been led to see the need for resisting with all your might this reptile that has crept into our society: If you have been led to think more fully in terms of sobriety and decent living; and above all, if you have been led to turn in simple faith and receive the free gift of God - eternal life through Jesus Christ - we shall count the efforts of this message well worth while. May God richly bless each and every one of you.



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